



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Public Library

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“Why We Left: Untold Songs and Stories of America's First Immigrants”

American History Through Traditional English and American Folk Ballads

San Diego, CA...The San Diego Public Library will host an author talk featuring Joanna Brooks, professor and chairperson of the English Department at San Diego State University, who will discuss her new book *Why We Left: Untold Songs and Stories of America's First Immigrants* in conjunction with the 2013 *One Book, One San Diego* reading campaign. The event will be held at 6:30 p.m., Monday, November 18, 2013 at the San Diego Central Library @ Joan A Irwin Jacobs Common, located at 330 Park Blvd in downtown San Diego. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing by Dr. Brooks at the event.

Why We Left is a myth-busting book about early English immigration to North America as told through traditional folk ballads. Dr. Brooks reveals the harsh realities behind 17th and 18th century working-class English emigration—and dismantles the idea that these immigrants were drawn to America as a land of opportunity. She follows American folk ballads back across the Atlantic, uncovering an archaeology of the worldviews of America's earliest immigrants and a haunting historical perspective on the ancestors we thought we knew. The book draws creatively on early folk ballads of England and America to make a brilliant contribution to our understanding of why people crossed the Atlantic to live in a strange new world. Haunting voices sing to us across the centuries a rich and disturbing ‘history from below.’

Dr. Brooks is professor and chairperson of the English Dept at SDSU. She is a national voice on religion and American life. Her recent books include *The Book of Mormon Girl: A Memoir of An American Faith*, *Transatlantic Feminisms in the Age of Revolutions*, and *Why We Left: Untold Songs and Stories of America's First Immigrants*. She has appeared as a commentator or guest on NPR, MSNBC, and the Daily Show. Her writing has also appeared in the Washington Post, Huffington Post, Tablet, Salon, and ReligionDispatches.org.

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One Book, One San Diego is a seven-year-old partnership between KPBS, San Diego Public Library, and San Diego County Library designed to bring the community together through a shared experience of reading and discussing the same book. Still more *One Book* events have been scheduled at the various City and County libraries. *One Book* is made possible by the Linden Root Dickinson Foundation, Lloyd Pest Control and the Cubic Corporation.

Learn about *One Book, One San Diego* and other programs at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library’s catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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